

CELEBRATION BY SACRIFICE

The Awful Toll of Joy

By WOODS HUTCHINSON, A. M., M. D.

It is astonishing how little real originality we have. Our ancestor of the Stone Age had just three ways of celebrating, or painting the town,—making a Big Noise, sacrificing something, and giving a Grand Spread, with raw liver and fresh cracked marrow-bones on the side. And ninety per cent. of our Twentieth Century celebrations still take one or other of these three sacred forms. Occasionally we vary the monotony by raising a monument, or getting up a procession; but then so did he a quarter of a million years ago.

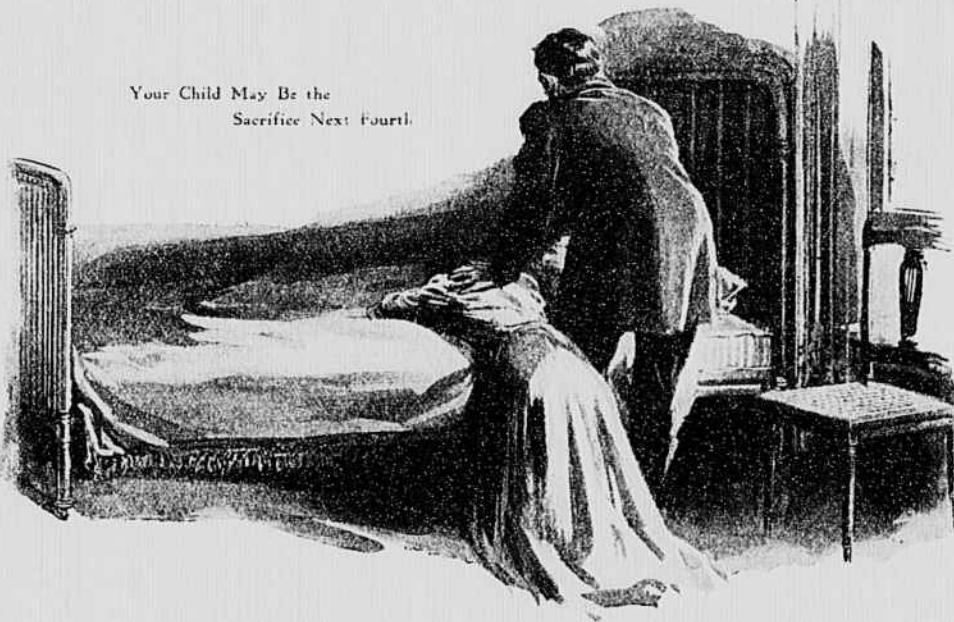
Our Sacred Gorges are still held annually at Thanksgiving and Christmas, and semi-occasionally, in the appalling shape of Public Dinners, in between. Our Big Noises have, for the most part, been civilized—partially—into brass bands and choral festivals. Our sacrifices have become mere symbols and figures of speech. But there still remains one sacred rite in which both the loud noise and the bloody sacrifice survive in all their pristine vigor and terrors—Our Glorious Fourth! It is a pagan pow-wow thinly veneered with Patriotism.

Begun in the most public-spirited and high-minded spirit, it has degenerated, from lack of intelligent direction, into an appalling plunge into the primitive, an unleashing of the raw savage within us, especially the Seven Devils under the shirt-waist of that Comanche of the Twentieth Century, The Small Boy! But he would not be half so bad if his fathers and big brothers did not furnish him with the sinews of war and lend him their support and countenance. It is really the Comanche in us "grown-ups" that is being let loose "just to please the kids."

In all the civilized world, there is no other celebration like it, so barbarous and, harsh as it may sound, so bloody! We have simply let a noble, patriotic celebration, worthy of most careful preservation and graceful development, degenerate into a riot, by turning it over to the small boy and the hoodlum.

The general line of argument appears to be that a boy has got about so much noise stored up inside of him anyhow, and that it is a helpful and time-saving thing to let him blow off steam

Your Child May Be the
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and get it all out of his system at least once a year! Certainly, opportunity to make all the noise he "darn pleases," appears to have the same fascination for a boy, that going on a "jag" has for some of his adult male relatives. But it is coming to be gravely doubted by hard-headed individuals whether either of these luxuries and explosions is really necessary to life, or happiness.

Indeed, just as the man who takes his enjoyment in some rational form at frequent intervals throughout the year is far better off than the one who grouches and grinds for months at a stretch, and then goes off on a big spree, so the boy who spreads his noise-making throughout the year, takes it in divided doses, gets quite as much wholesome fun with far less danger to himself and annoyance to others, than if he saves it up for one grand burst on the Glorious Fourth.

We have such a gorgeous variety of noises in our modern civilization anyway, that with little ingenuity it is surely possible to get enough of the soul-satisfaction, that comes from deep, reverberating booms and bangs and loud, teeth-jarring clangs, in the other 364 days of the year. Our interesting G—ad infinitum—Grandfather, who invented this form of celebration, had pit-

fully few days of making a noise. Only a stick and a hollow gourd, or rattle drums, and a few sea shells to blow into. Besides, he was desperately afraid of The Silence, poor beggar, and only felt sure that something was not going to catch him when he was making a tremendous noise. Surely with our glorious battery of civilized sounds, the chugging of automobiles, the bang of a missed blast, or a punctured tire, the rattle of our street cars, the clanging of our gongs, our ambulances, our locomotives, our boiler factories, our motorcycles, our telephones and our phonographs, even the most noise-thirsty young Comanche might get all the bombardment of his auditory nerve that is in any way necessary for his proper growth and development.

Certainly some compromise could be worked out, and in a few years he would no longer feel the need of his now priceless annual privilege—indeed would have forgotten that it ever existed. Just forbid the sale of

fireworks from June 1st and see how it works. It will empty the casualty wards of the hospitals.

And the awful price in blood and suffering which he has paid for his privilege! We hold life so cheap in America that it seems little better than waste of time to refer to it. But what would the Revolutionists of '76 have thought if they had known that the Republic, to found which they shed their blood and offered their lives, would shed more blood and sacrifice more lives every twenty-five years in celebrating their triumph, than it cost them to achieve it! Year after year we have seen this sacrifice repeated, year after year we have read the news-reports of hundreds of lives destroyed; and statistics of thousands of torn limbs, broken bones, blinded eyes, of crippling and lock-jaw have been gathered together from all over the country and published, 5,397 killed and wounded in 1909 alone! But the only response of the good-natured American public has been:

"Oh, let the boys have their fun; we were young once!" Fun at the price of human life is sadly out of date. It belongs to the ages of the corroboree, the torture-stake, and the arena. Besides your child may be the sacrifice next Fourth.

THE SONG OF THE REVOLUTION

By Elizabeth L. Stocking

Of all the patriotic songs which are played and sung on "Independence Day," there is only one which really dates back to Revolutionary times, and that is "Yankee Doodle."

Controversy has waxed hot and much literature has been written in regard to both the tune and the words of this song. Some writers have claimed that the tune was of Dutch origin, others have fixed its birthplace in Spain or Hungary. These theories, however, have been proved improbable, and the only thing certain about the tune is that it was sung to an old nursery rhyme in England long before the "Yankee Doodle" words were set to it in America. This is the nursery rhyme which I am sure you will all recognize:

"Lucy Locket lost her pocket,
Kitty Fisher found it;
Not a bit of money in it,
Only binding round it."

The original "Yankee Doodle" words are composed of fifteen verses beginning:

"Father and I went down to camp,
Along with Captain Gooding;
There we set the men and boys
As thick as hasty pudding."

Followed by the chorus which runs as follows:

"Yankee doodle, keep it up,
Yankee doodle dandy;
Mind the music and the step,
And with the girls be handy."

Now, "doodle," according to the Oxford dictionary, means a foolish fellow, generally of the rural type. The verses, therefore, are evidently intended to describe the visit of a rustic youth and his father to a war-camp.

The song goes on to tell of their sights and experiences.

"And there we saw a swamping gun,
Large as a log of maple,
Upon a deuced little cart—
A load for father's cattle."

"And every time they shoot it off
It takes a horn of powder,
It makes a noise like father's gun,
Only a nation louder."

He speaks of the tender in the following manner:

"And there was Captain Washington,
The gentlefolks about him;
They say he's grown so tarral prond,
He will not ride without 'em."

This "doodle" saw some men digging graves, and

"It scared me so, I hooked it off,
Nor stopped as I remember;
Nor turned about till I got home,
Locked up in mother's chamber."

Critics have said that "Yankee Doodle" will never be spoiled by editing as it could not be worse, but in spite of its slang, incorrect grammar, and imperfect rhymes, the attempts to fit more literary words to the tune have never been successful. There is something appealing in the rollicking burlesque.

One tradition in regard to these words tells us that during the French and Indian War, in 1755, a force of regulars and Colonial troops was stationed near Albany. The Colonials coming in from various localities in all kinds of nondescript uni-

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